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MARDO



YELLOW-FOOTED ANTECHINUS

SCIENTIFIC NAME: Antechinus flavipes (yellow footed hedgehog like animal)

IDENTIFICATION: The Mardo is the size of a large mouse. It's fur is grey with some reddish-brown towards the rump and feet. The belly is quite pale. Lighter rings of fur around the eye are also quite apparent. Mardos have pointed heads with dark eyes and large ears.

Length 22 .1 cm (males), 19.1 cm (females)

Weight 56 gm (males), 34 gm (females)

Mardo tracks are easily distinguished from those of rodents by the arrangement of the toes in the tracks. The five front toe prints are evenly spread, while the four hind toe prints all point forwards, compared with the Bush Rat tracks. The usual gait of the Mardo is a series of short, jerky bounds, but they also move slowly at times, using a rolling walk.

HABITAT: Jarrah forests, dense undergrowth in karri, woodlands, heath and coastal vegetation along the southern coast. Studies show Mardos will rapidly return to burnt areas.

DIET: Invertebrates, small mammals, birds and reptiles. May also eat flowers and nectar.

STATUS: The Mardo is widespread through the eastern states and in scattered populations of the south west of Western Australia. It is not on the endangered list and is quite common in the areas where it exists.

INTERESTING FACTS: Like Phascogales, all males die shortly after mating! The Mardo also has the unusual habit when eating bony animals like birds and mice, it neatly turns their skins inside out while eating them.

